

A BRIEF  
RELATION  
OF THE  
Life & Death  
OF  
Elizabeth Braytwhaite,

A Maid of the Age of about Seventeen Years, who died  
in Prison for the Testimony of a good Conscience  
in the Town of Kendal in Westmorland, the  
26th of the 7th month 1684.

In several Testimonies hereafter inserted

The Testimony of Anne Gardner her Mother.

AS it was the Blessing of Almighty God to give me this dear Child  
yet more especially in that by his Grace her heart was inclined  
to love, fear and serve him, even from her very tender years; and  
truly subject and obedient to her parents; sober and chaste in her Life  
and conversation; kind and courteous to all people; of a meek and  
quiet Spirit, wherefore beloved of most that knew her; and the  
greater comfort and blessing to me while it pleased God to give me  
the enjoyment of her. And being now removed, the remembrance  
thereof so sweet, I know not that there is any can charge her justly  
with any wrong done to them, either by word or deed; for her life  
and delight was in innocency and love adorned with meekness.

She with several other Friends within the parish of *Wendover*  
were by the wardens presented, or had their names given in to Sir  
*John* *Elliot* *Toller* for being four weeks absent from the Church.

piece, for the four weeks or Sundays (so called) absence; but the  
Officers not finding goods of hers (nor several others) their names  
again were returned to the said Justice, as Persons not having goods  
to answer the said four Shillings, whereupon a second warrant was  
issued forth bearing date the 25th of the 5th month, 1684. And  
upon the 29th of the same month: The Constable, *The. Ellery*, took  
her, and several others, and brought them to *Kendal* to prison, where  
she died; At the time when she was taken, severall of her Neighbours  
would gladly have paid for her, whom she intreated by all meanes  
not to do it, for if they did, it would be much more Exercise to her then  
going to Prison, whereby she perswaded them. Yet notwithstanding  
several of them were sorely grieved that she should go to Prison,  
blaming the Officers for Presenting her, telling them, it was a shame  
for them, she being in a manner but a child, and one whom they  
knew to be an Innocent Maid, and had done no evil nor harm to any,  
neither was that the cause of her suffering.

After she had been some time in Prison, the Keeper gave her leave  
to go home to her Brothers house (whose House keeper she was) for  
a few days; But had steyed but about two days till she was sent for  
again, by reason as it was said complaint was made against the Keeper  
for giving Friends (his Prisoners) too much Liberty; as soon as she  
heard that she was sent for again, she could not be satisfied till she was  
returned to Prison; for, said she, *that is my place, and my present home,*  
*I have no more peace and content.* At that time again her Neighbour  
were very importunent to pay for her, she charged, *as they had any*  
*love or respect for her, not to do it, for if one penny will do it, it shall never*  
*be done with my consent,* said she, thus stedfast and constant was she  
in her Testimony to the Truth unto the end, regarding the Peace of  
her Conscience more then the Liberty of her Body.

About two days after her return to Prison she began to be ill, being  
the 17th day of the 7th month: and growing worse, sent for me  
upon the 19th; and I staid with her that day, then she being willing  
to part with me, I having two young Children at home, I left her, and  
came again the 22th day, and then staid with her to the end. I asked  
her, if she had any mind to be at home, or with me at our house; she  
said, *I am at home in my place, & am full content, & if my God so order*  
*it, I shall be satisfied, I had rather die here then in any other place, and*

I began to be sick & here I have  
been till I am dead, whether life or death, I am alike  
content in the will of God, and true content in the will of God, and true content in the will of God, and true content in the will of God.

grieved that there should be so little tenderness or pity in the hearts of my Persecutors to keep such a poor young one as I am in Prison; the Lord forgive them, I can freely. A Friend that was her Fellow-Prisoner, sitting by, said to her, dear Betty, thou art not in a condition now to be removed, if thou wert at Liberty, and desired it; No, said she, I do not in the least desire it, I am fully content to be here, if I did, there is so much hardness of heart, that I believe, it would not be granted, and for their sakes that are so I am sorry, for I never did any of them wrong, nor hath any thing in my heart but love and good-will to them, and all people upon the earth; nor do I blame them that were the cause of my being here, knowing that its by the permission of the Almighty, that's greater, and above the greatest of my Persecutors; whom I believe will shortly set me free from these and all other bonds, over all their heads, and in his peace, in true patience I possess my soul, and am contented, if it be his will to be dissolved.

The same Friend asked her the reason that she was so willing to die; Oh, said she, I have seen glorious sights of good things. The Friend further queried what she had seen; she answered, They are so excellent and glorious that its not utterable, or words to that effect: And now, said she, I have nothing but love and good-will to all people; but more especially is my Life gladdened in the love and unity that I have with Friends with whom I have been often refreshed in our meetings together, with the refreshments that now come from the presence of the Lord; Oh the good evening meetings that we have had, I am comforted in the remembrance of them: Another time, she said to me, Mother, They say we shall spend all our riches with lying here in Prison; Nay, said she, our riches are durable and our treasure hidden, laid up in heaven. Oh, Mother, be very zealous for the Lord, for he is very good and gracious a plentiful Rewarder of all them that love and fear him: It was hard for me to refrain from weeping, when I saw her under a great weight of sickness; at which she was always troubled, saying, Dear Mother do not weep, but resign me freely up into the hands of the Lord; weep not for me, for I am well, Christ is with me, my Redeemer is with me; also seeing her Sister sorrowful, she said, Come, Sisters, lie down by me, do not sorrow for me, I am well content to live, or die, for my God hath blessed me, and will bless me, and his blessing resteth on me. Some time before she departed, her speech failed, after which there would often a pure voice run through her, making melody in her heart unto the Lord, often lifting up her hand, with a very cheerful countenance, sounding forth melodiously to the refreshment of all the fenceable by her: often taking me, her Father-in-law, Brother



and Sister, and other Friends by the hands with great affection, and so continued till she fell a sleep in the Lord, and is at rest with God her Maker.

My Spirit was much comforted in the Lord on her behalf in the time of her sickness, who indued her with patience, and wonderfully bore up her spirit above the pain and sickness, that was upon her body, so that I never heard her complain all the time. And as to her Suffering for her Testimony I know it was innocent, & with true contentedness, and my soul blesseth the Lord that counted her worthy, and preserved her in faithfulness to the end. And now she hath born a faithful Testimony for God, his name, truth and worship, and against the contrary, according to her measure, and hath kept the faith, and finished her course with joy, and laid down her head in peace and rest with her God, being ascended above the reach of all sorrow, sufferings or afflictions, to praise the Lord that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb for ever: In the undoubted sense of which my soul and spirit both praise and magnifie his name on her behalf; and indeed the same doth ever balance the loss I have of her, as to the outward, well knowing that my loss is her everlasting gain, and desiring that I may be subject to the will of the Lord, and that he may have the glory of all his works, for he is worthy who gave me her, and now hath taken her away, blessed be his holy name for ever.

*Anne Gardner.*

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The Testimony of *Thomas Gardner*, Father-in-law to the  
said *Elizabeth Braythwaite*.

MY Testimony for this Maid, is, that since I knew her, she was alwayes sober and chaste, of an innocent meek spirit, in this I know she surpassed most of her equals in years, never having an evil word against any body that ever I heard of, but got the good love, even of all sorts of People, alwayes patient, not given to anger, but if at any time any difference should have hapned, so that she had been wronged, she would have suffered, rather then to contend in words her own cause, saying, *I know I am clear, & can bear, & suffer, rather then contend in words which increase strife*, and in so doing reached the better part in dealing with whom she had to do, so that her Adversaries spoke well of her.



In all the time of her confinement, she was never heard to complain in the least, or to blame them that were the cause of her suffering, but was always content, willingly given up to suffer affliction and imprisonment, for the testimony of a good Conscience, relating to the way of his worship in spirit and truth, which in measure she was come to be a witness of, and therefore durst not practice otherwise; and I am well satisfied that she laid down her head in perfect peace, and is at true rest with God her Maker and Redeemer, and in the remembrance of her innocent, chaste and unspotted life, and faithfulness in her suffering to death, as also her sweet end; I am abundantly refreshed and comforted, let God have all the praise of his works of wonder, who is worthy forever.

*Thomas Gardner.*

*John Braynhaite his Testimony concerning his dear  
Sister Elizabeth Braynhaite.*

**A**S to the blameless and innocent life of my dear Sister deceased I need not say much, its well known to all that had acquaintance with her, nay her Prosecutors will confess to the truth thereof, and as to her faithfulness in her testimony to the truth, its confirmed by her constancy and stedfastness to death in bonds for the same, together with her zeal and care at all times to prevent her Neighbours of paying that which she could not her self do for conscience sake, whereby her Testimony in that behalf might have been made void, yea all the time of her health it was her daily care to prevent any one that was so inclined (as several was, if they might but have done it, and have had her favour) and also in the time of her sickness, it was her great trouble, if she heard but the least word of any ones inclination of paying for her; several times she said to me, *Brother John, what think'st thou, will any of my Neighbours pay the four shillings for me, I would by no means have any to do it, I had rather die here then one Penny should be paid for me by any, for I owe nothing to any but love, neither have done wrong to any that I know of;* this was her constancy and stedfastness to the end, in all the time of her imprisonment being abundantly filled with peace and content, innocent as a Lamb to the very end, in the face of which my spirit is comforted. I know she lived in the fear

of the Almighty, and died in his favour, wherefore her latter end was happy and blessed, having attained the good old age in her young years.

I had a perfect knowledge of her from her Cradle, and so can testify to her innocency, meekness and patience, from certain experience; for as we were the fruit of one womb, so we lived mostly together in one house, till she was taken to Prison, and after my Mother married the second time she became my house-keeper, and very comfortably we lived together; and a faithful Sister and companion she was to me on all accounts; wherefore my loss of her as to the outward is great, yet I desire to be well contented in the will of God, and more especially, because its gain to her, being removed and taken away from the evil to come.

She was committed to Prison at *Kendall*, the 29th day of the 5th month 1684. and upon the 17th of the 7th month she began to be sick, and died the 26th of the same month, having lay sick ten days, and been Prisoner two months wanting three days, and on the morrow being the 7th day of the week, & Market-day at *Kendall*, her Body was accompanied through the Town, by many Friends of several Meetings, and her Fellow Prisoners for the like cause of not paying the Sunday shillings, so called; together with many Relations and Neighbours, to the burying place, or grave-yard; and the innocency of her life, and manner of her sufferings and death, affected many hearts and several reflected upon the severity of her Persecutors, and bore testimony to her blameless and innocent life, which was of service to truth; also there were several testimonies in the demonstration of Gods power born for the Truth in the Grave-yard, which had an entrance upon the sober-minded People, till a Constable came very furiously and pulled away a Friend off his knees, in the time of exercise in prayer to Almighty God, and hailed him before the then Mayor of *Kendal*, who was moderate, and dismissed the said Friend; thus was the Body of my dear Sister interred the 27th of the 7th month, who though her Body be gone to the dust, yet is her Spirit ascended on high (its my firm belief) far above the reach of the wrath of Man, where her sufferings are ceased, and sorrow come to an end, and tears wiped away forever.

Written the 24th of the 7th month 1684.

John Braythwaite.

Blessed be they that are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints. Psal. 116. 15.  
And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him,  
that he will bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.  
13. 7, 8.*

### Postscript.

Part of the foregoing Testimonies, relating to the vertuous life, constant suffering, comfortable end, and sweet finishing here, of a faithful Maid, coming to my hands from the several Persons, whose names are subscribed, having also received several passages, from her fellow-Prisoners, by word of mouth, who were eye and ear witnesses of her constant zeal for the Testimony of Gods blessed truth, and a good conscience in the sight of God, and also of the great peace and contentedness that she laid down her head in: I was minded to transcribe what I had in writing, as to the substance thereof, adding thereto, as near as I could remember, in the places where I had the substance of what I received by word of mouth.



(8)  
the commands of holy Jesus, whom they profess, in this persecution  
his poor innocent Lambs, and so might by true repentance divert those  
heavy, just and righteous judgments of Almighty God denounce  
against the oppressors of his People.

And now, who ever reads the before-going Testimonies, you may be  
that this innocent Maid was in the holy practice of the antient tribu-  
ted followers of Christ, a sufferer for his name and righteousness sake,  
not a persecutor, but persecuted, a holy pattern, and good example  
both to young and old, her memorial is sweet: I was often to visit  
her and her Fellow Prisoners, and twice while she lay sick, and her  
spirit was comforted in her innocency and integrity to God; good was  
he to her, and filled her with comfort and satisfaction, in the sense of  
her Redeemer with her, as is before related, and now she is at rest from  
her labour, and her works follow her, Amen.

*The 30th of the 9th Month, 1684.*